

The Safety Factor

Reclamation Safety Photo Contest

Bruce C. Muller, Jr. | Director, Security Safety and Law Enforcement | Denver Office

On Thursday, March 2, Bruce Muller, Director, Security Safety and Law Enforcement (SSLE), sent out the following information for all Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation) employees to participate in Reclamation's first Safety Photo Contest.

The purpose of the Safety Photo Contest is to increase awareness of Reclamation's safety program and encourage employee participation. All photos will be made available for any and all safety related products, such as: the annual Safety Calendar, safety web sites, and presentations.

Submissions must be original photos that represent safety and safety related actions on Reclamation facilities.

Photos can be submitted through the close of business on August 31. All entries should be submitted through the Great Plains Intranet at: <http://intra.gp.usbr.gov/tmp/safety.htm>.

A separate photo entry folder has been created for each region. Please make sure to use your region's submission section.

Requirements: All photos MUST:

- Be camera-originals (not cropped, adjusted or retouched);
- Include an informative caption (please not on the photo);
- Be related to a Reclamation project, facility, or activity; and
- Not have the time/date stamp feature on the image. Any stamped images will not be judged as part of the contest.

Great Plains Public Affairs will judge the photos and determine winners based on image quality and composition, effective use of safety equipment and procedures, illustration of Reclamation activities, and incorporation of the "I Care About Safety" branding.

SSLE will review the selected winners and determine if the photos appropriately illustrate safety from a corporate standpoint.

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Welcome

The Safety Factor has a new publisher/coordinator/editor-in-chief, [Ruthely Thompson](#)! Submit all your lessons learned, near misses, or other safety related information to Ruthely. Don't forget the pictures!

Expect a fresh new look in the next issue of *The Safety Factor*.



On the Safe Side

Don't Be a Distracted Driver

Recently, a Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation) employee operating a government vehicle was recorded driving erratically, endangering himself and those around him. It

turned into a segment on the local news. As public servants we should always set the example by exercising proper safety protocols.

Distracted driving is a dangerous epidemic on America's roadways. In 2014 alone, 3,179 people were killed in distracted driving crashes.

On September 30, 2009, President Obama signed an Executive Order directing federal employees not to engage in text messaging:

- While driving government-owned vehicles;
- When using electronic equipment supplied by the government while driving; or
- While driving privately owned vehicles when the employee is on official government business.
- The order also encourages federal contractors and others doing business with the government to adopt and enforce their own policies banning texting while driving on the job.

Below are additional safe driving tips.

1. Focus on driving

- Keep 100% of your attention on driving at all times – no multi-tasking.
- Don't use your phone or any other electronic device while driving.
- Slow down. Speeding gives you less time to react and increases the severity of an accident.

2. Drive "defensively"

- Be aware of what other drivers around you are doing, and expect the unexpected.
- Assume other motorists will do something crazy, and always be prepared to avoid it.
- Keep a 2 second cushion between you and the car in front of you.
- Make that 4 seconds if the weather is bad.

3. Plan ahead

- Build time into your trip schedule to stop for food, rest breaks, phone calls or other business.
- Adjust your seat, mirrors and climate controls before putting the car in gear.
- Pull over to eat or drink. It takes only a few minutes.

4. Practice safety

- Secure cargo that may move around while the vehicle is in motion.
- Don't attempt to retrieve items that fall to the floor.
- Have items needed within easy reach – such as toll fees, toll cards and garage passes.
- Always wear your seat belt and drive sober and drug-free.



Remember, SAFETY, SAFETY, SAFETY. Distracted drivers are not only putting themselves, but those around them, in danger. Don't be the example of what not to do. Exercise proper safety procedures so that you and those around you ARRIVE ALIVE!

10 Tips for Managing Driver Distraction

[Governors Highway Safety Association](#)

Distracted drivers pose a deadly risk to everyone on the road. The [National Highway Traffic Safety Administration](#) estimates that in 2014, the most recent year data is available, 3,179 people lost their lives and another 431,000 were injured in distraction-affected crashes. Drivers engage in a range of distracting activities from talking and texting on their phones, to eating, grooming, and reading. Even the use of hands-free technologies isn't without risk as dangerous mental distractions exist even when drivers keep their hands on the wheel and eyes on the road.

Here are 10 tips for managing some of the most common distractions.

1. Turn it off and stow it. Turn your phone off or switch it to silent mode before you get in the car. Then stow it away so that it's out of reach.
2. Spread the word. Record a message on your phone that tells callers you're driving and will get back to them when you're off the road, or sign up for a service that offers this feature.
3. Pull over. If you need to make a call, pull over to a safe area first.
4. Use your passengers. Ask a passenger to make the call or respond to a text for you.
5. X the Text. Don't ever text and drive, surf the web or read your e-mail while driving. It's dangerous and against the law in most states. Even voice-to-text isn't risk-free.
6. Know the law. Familiarize yourself with state and local laws before you get in the car. Some states and localities prohibit the use of hand-held cell phones in addition to texting.
7. Prepare. If using a Global Positioning System (GPS) device, enter your destination before you start to drive. If you prefer a map or written directions, review them in advance. If you need help while driving, ask a passenger to assist you or pull over to a safe location to change your GPS or review your map/directions.
8. Secure your pets. Unsecured pets can be a big distraction in the car.
9. Mind the kids. Pull over to a safe place to address situations involving children in the car.
10. Focus on driving. Multi-tasking behind the wheel is dangerous. Refrain from eating, drinking, reading, grooming, smoking, and any other activity that takes your mind and eyes off the road.

'Massive' Effects: New Report Says Sleepy Workers Cost U.S. Economy up to \$411B Annually

Safety+Health Magazine | [National Safety Council](#)

Lack of sleep among U.S. workers results in an increased risk of death and the loss of 1.2 million working days per year, and costs the economy up to \$411 billion annually, according to a new report from RAND Europe, part of the nonprofit research institute RAND Corp.

Researchers examined data from more than 62,000 workers in five countries in 2015 and 2016. The countries were part of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development.

Work-related factors linked to inadequate sleep included irregular work hours, long commutes, and job-related time pressures.

The United States topped the list of five countries in terms of highest costs and most working days lost.

[Click here to read the full story.](#)



You may also want to read:

[Sleep, Performance, and Public Safety](#)

[Research Links Lack of Sleep to Increased Risk of Vehicle Crashes](#)

[Fatigue and Worker Safety](#)

Electric Power Generation, Transmission, and Distribution: Major Changes to the Rule

[Occupational Safety and Health Administration](#)

A new fact sheet highlights some of the major changes in OSHA's General Industry (29 CFR 1910.269) and Construction (29 CFR 1926, Subpart V) standards, covering work involving electric power generation, transmission and distribution lines, and equipment. The revisions better protect workers, while also making the two standards more consistent. Several important revisions to the standards include:

Information Transfer, §1910.269(a)(3) and §1926.950(c)

Who is a host employer? A host employer is an employer who operates, or controls the operating procedures for, an electric power generation, transmission, or distribution installation on which a contract employer is performing work covered by the revised standard(s). In many cases, the host employer is the electric utility company.

Who is a contract employer? A contract employer is an employer under contract, other than a host employer, who performs work covered by the revised standards.

- Before work begins host employers must inform contract employers of safety-related information including:
 - Nominal voltages of lines and equipment
 - Maximum switching transient voltages
 - Presence of hazardous induced voltages
 - Presence of protective grounds and equipment grounding conductors
 - Locations of circuits and equipment, including electric supply lines, communications lines, and fire-protective signaling circuits

And if known

- Condition of any protective grounds and equipment grounding conductors
- Condition of poles
- Environmental conditions relating to safety
- Subcontractors must also receive this information. For example, a host employer may arrange for the information exchange through a contract requirement for the contractor to share the information with any subcontractors.
- Contract employers must ensure that their workers are informed of the hazards they find out about during the information transfer, and let the host employer

know of any hazardous conditions they find during their work.

- Host and contract employers must coordinate their work rules and procedures so that all workers are protected.

Minimum Approach Distances (MADs), §1910.269(l)(3) and §1926.960(c)(1)

- The employer must establish MADs of at least the distances computed using the tables in the standards.
- The employer must ensure that no worker crosses the MAD, unless they are appropriately insulated from electrical hazards.
- Work on systems operating at over 72.5 kV requires the employer to determine the maximum anticipated per-unit transient overvoltage, phase-to-ground.

Fall Protection, §1910.269(g)(2) and §1926.954(b)

- Employers generally must ensure that all workers (both qualified and unqualified) use appropriate fall protection when they are climbing or changing location on poles, towers, or similar structures.
- Each worker working from an aerial lift must use either a fall restraint system, or a personal fall arrest system. Workers working from an aerial lift must not use work-positioning equipment

Protecting Workers from Electric Arcs and Flames, §1910.269(l)(8) and §1926.960(g)

- Employers must assess the workplace to identify workers exposed to hazards from flames or electric arcs.
- Employers must make a reasonable estimate of the incident heat energy for every worker exposed to hazards from electric arcs.
- Employers must ensure that each worker exposed to hazards from flames or electric arcs does not wear clothing that could melt or ignite, and that each worker's outer layer is flame-resistant, as specified in the standards.
- Employers must ensure that when the estimated incident heat energy exceeds 2.0 cal/cm² workers wear protective clothing, as specified in the standards.

[Click here for the full fact sheet.](#)

On the Safe Side

What Does Communication Have to Do with Safety?

Don McBride | Safety and Occupation Health Manager | Phoenix Area Office

Ref: *Crucial Conversations, Tools for Talking When Stakes are High* | Kerry Patterson | Second edition 2012.

Safety requires open and honest communication, and the courage to speak up if you see a hazard or something (or someone) that is unsafe.

Example:

Silence Kills.—A doctor is getting ready to insert an intravenous (IV) into a patient, but fails to put on the proper gloves, gown, and mask (PPE—personal protective equipment) to ensure the procedure is done safely. A nurse reminds the doctor of the proper protections, but the doctor ignores the

comment. The other nurses simply keep silent. Every year, unsafe acts cost lives. Occasionally, we see people taking shortcuts or breaking safety rules, but we don't speak up.

The real problem is that those who observe a deviation of rules or unsafe act, often say nothing! And when we don't speak up, when we don't communicate, the impacts affect everyone's safety. The underlying cause of many accidents, is the co-worker or bystander was unwilling to

speak up at crucial moments.

When the stakes are high, effective communications are essential, and may save someone's life by communicating and having that conversation, as opposed to saying nothing.

The key to change does not lie in implementing new policies or procedures, but getting people to hold one another accountable for unsafe acts or unacceptable behavior. That requires mutual respect and open and honest communication practices. Everyone holds everyone else accountable, regardless of rank or position. The path to success, and getting results, is because of trust and having crucial conversations.

The way we communicate about safety will influence whether or not people will understand and participate in the safety process.

Enhancing Safety Culture through Effective Communication

Summer Workplace Safety Tips to Beat the Sun and the Heat

[Partners in Performance](#)

These are just a few great workplace summer safety tips that will help you to make it through the hot summer months. Remember that safety is important all year long.

- Always dress appropriately. While short sleeved shirts and shorts are great when it is hot, they don't protect against the sun and they often don't meet site personal protective equipment (PPE) minimum requirements.
- Keep all clothing light colors. The darker the fabric the more sun it will attract and absorb.
- Wear clothes that breath. Nothing should be too tight. This will allow fresh air to flow over your skin and help you stay cool. Modern ultraviolet (UV) resistant fabrics are fantastic at keeping out the sun and keeping cool.
- Drink plenty of fluids. Water and sports drinks are two excellent choices. Stay away from sugary soda's and energy drinks. They can speed up the dehydration process.
- Wear sun block and a protective hat if you are going to be in the sun. The sun can be very damaging to your skin if it is left unprotected.
- Bug spray will help you avoid insect bites.
- Take breaks and go indoors or into an air conditioned car. It is important to allow your body a chance to recover from the heat.
- If you being to feel dizzy, weak or nauseous please take a break immediately. If your symptoms do not go away after getting out of the heat you should call for medical attention.
- 10:00 a.m. until 2:00 p.m. is when the sun is at its highest point in the sky. [*Editor's note:* In the Western United States the hottest time of the day is usually between 3:00 p.m. and 4:45 p.m.] It is also when it is at its hottest. If it is at all possible to avoid outdoor work during these hours it will greatly reduce your risk of a summer heat related injury or illness.
- Sunglasses and hats are great accessories for the summer season. Sunglasses will help to protect your eyes from harmful UV rays. Hats are great at preventing sunburn. They also help keep your body slightly cooler than it would be if you were to go without a hat. Your head has a large number of close to surface blood vessels which are good at keeping your head cool, but move the heat to the rest of your body.